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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES  
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USMISSION GENEVA  
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USEEC

ROME FOR VATICAN OFFICE

E.O. 12065: GDS 5/2/86 (FRIEDMAN, TOWNSEND B.) OR-P  
TAGS: SHUM AR  
SUBJ: (U) HUMAN RIGHTS SUMMARY - APRIL 19-MAY 2, 1980

REF: BUENOS AIRES 3255

1. (C) SUMMARY: AN ACCUSED TERRORIST WINDS UP IN JAIL,  
RATHER THAN DISAPPEARED. THE ITALIAN AMBASSADOR SHOWS  
PUBLIC "UNDERSTANDING" OF GOA. HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVISTS IN-  
TEND TO PRINT AND DISTRIBUTE THE IAHRC REPORT. END SUMMARY.

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2. (U) TERRORIST JAILED: THE PRESS REPORTED THE ARREST  
OF GERARDO MANUEL REINOSO, WHO HAD BEEN ON THE GOA'S WANTED  
LIST SINCE 1976 FOR HIS ALLEGED MEMBERSHIP IN A TERROR-

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Department of State, A/GIS/IPS/SRP  
Change to  
( ) Release ( ) Deny ( ) Declassify  
( ) Exemptions b ( ) E.O. 13526 25x ( ) ( )  
Declassify after  
With concurrence of:  
obtained Date 2-14-80  
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IST ORGANIZATION. REINOSO, WHO REPORTEDLY HAD BEEN LIVING CLANDESTINELY IN ARGENTINA, ORIGINALLY JOINED THE "CHE GUEVARA REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT" IN 1976. HE IS BEING HELD AT THE DISPOSITION OF A FEDERAL JUDGE.

3. (C) AS A KNOWLEDGEABLE ARGENTINE ARMY COLONEL POINTED OUT TO US, IN THE VERY RECENT PAST AN INDIVIDUAL, SUCH AS REINOSO, ACCUSED OF PAST ACTIVE ASSOCIATION WITH TERRORISTS WOULD SIMPLY HAVE "DISAPPEARED." HE SAID THAT THE USE OF THE LAW IN THIS MATTER FOLLOWS CLEAR ORDERS FROM THE HIGHEST LEVELS OF THE GOA FOR DEALING WITH SUCH CASES. IF SO, IT WOULD MARK ANOTHER IMPORTANT STEP ON ARGENTINA'S RETURN TOWARDS THE RULE OF LAW. WE CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT HARD-CORE, ACTIVE TERRORISTS WHO ARE CAPTURED BY THE GOVERNMENT WILL CONTINUED TO BE TREATED AS IN THE PAST: INTERROGATION AND, AT SOME POINT, EXECUTION.

4. (C) MORE ON THE BENITEZ AND OTHER 1980 DISAPPEARANCES: THIS MAY BE THE CASE OF ANGEL SERVANDO BENITEZ, WHOSE DISAPPEARANCE REPORTEDLY TOOK PLACE MARCH 20 (REFTEL). A RELIABLE DIPLOMATIC COLLEAGUE HAS TOLD US THAT ACCORDING TO BENITEZ'S FAMILY THE DISAPPEARED MAN SPENT ABOUT TEN MONTHS LIVING ABROAD, ALLEGEDLY IN SPAIN AFTER WHAT THE FAMILY DESCRIBED AS A "QUARREL" WITH HIS WIFE. THEN, EARLIER THIS YEAR HE TRAVELED FROM EUROPE TO RIO WHERE HE MET HIS WIFE AND SMALL CHILD. AFTER THIS REUNION, BENITEZ, SENT HIS FAMILY AHEAD OF HIM TO ARGENTINA, TRAVELING HIMSELF TO BUENOS AIRES SEPARATELY BY A ROUTE HE

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NEVER REVEALED. ON THE BASIS OF THIS SOMEWHAT UNUSUAL TRAVEL HISTORY, OUR SOURCE CLEARLY SUSPECTS THAT BENITEZ MAY HAVE BEEN INVOLVED WITH TERRORISTS. OF COURSE, WHATEVER HIS INVOLVEMENT BENITEZ IS ENTITLED TO THE PROTECTION OF THE LAW AND DUE PROCESS, A POINT WE HAVE BEEN MAKING IN GENERAL TERMS TO OUR GOA CONTACTS FOR MANY MONTHS.

5. (U) DISAPPEARANCE REPORTED UNFOUNDED: ON A HAPPIER NOTE, THE CLAIM MADE IN BRAZIL THAT A BRAZILIAN ACTIVIST AND HIS ARGENTINE GIRL FRIEND HAD DISAPPEARED IN ARGENTINA APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN INACCURATE. ACCORDING TO THE BRAZILIAN CONSULATE HERE, THE TWO WERE DETAINED BY BUENOS AIRES POLICE FOR SEVERAL HOURS BUT THEN RELEASED. WE HAVE BEEN TOLD BY PERMANENT ASSEMBLY CONTACTS THAT THEY HAVE HAD NO DIRECT INQUIRIES OR RE-

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QUESTS CONCERNING THE OTHER 1980 REPORTED DISAPPEARANCES,  
LUIS DE CORDOBA AND RICARDO SORIA.

6. (U) ITALIAN AMBASSADOR PATS GOA ON BACK: THE PRESS  
REPORTS THAT ITALY'S AMBASSADOR TO ARGENTINA, UBERTO  
BOZZINI, TOLD A PRESS CONFERENCE THAT, ITALY'S OWN EXPERIENCE  
WITH TERRORISM ENABLES IT TO "ADOPT A MORE UNDERSTAND-  
ING ATTITUDE TOWARDS ARGENTINA." THE AMBASSADOR'S  
REMARK, WHICH WAS MADE TO PROVINCIAL PAPERS IN SALTA,  
PARALLELS A SIMILAR COMMENT THAT HE MADE TO THE PRESS  
IN LA PLATA SEVERAL WEEKS AGO.

7. (C) THE AMBASSADOR'S COMMENT REFLECTS WHAT APPEARS  
TO US AS A GENERAL TREND OF IMPROVEMENT IN RELATIONS  
BETWEEN EUROPEAN GOVERNMENTS AND THE GOA. ONE EC-9  
DIPLOMAT TOLD US THAT THOUGH THE ARGENTINES HAVE A WAY  
TO GO, HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES ARE INCREASINGLY LESS IMPOR-  
TANT IN RELATIONS BETWEEN ARGENTINA AND EUROPEAN CAPITALS.  
THE PUBLICATIONS OF THE IAHRC REPORT MAY SLOW THIS  
PROCESS OF IMPROVEMENT, BUT IN HIS VIEW THE DELAY WILL  
BE A TEMPORARY ONE SO LONG AS ARGENTINA AVOIDS THE  
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GROSS VIOLATIONS OF THE PAST.

8. (LOU) IAHRC REPORT: THE IAHRC COMMISSION REPORT  
CONTINUES TO BE UNAVAILABLE IN ARGENTINA. HUMAN RIGHTS  
ACTIVISTS TOLD US THAT THEY HAVE MADE ARRANGEMENTS TO  
HAVE THE REPORT PUBLISHED HERE BY A PRIVATE PRINTING  
HOUSE AND HOPE TO HAVE AS MANY AS 100,000 COPIES DIS-  
TRIBUTED. THEY DO NOT KNOW WHAT THE GOA'S ATTITUDE

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9. (LOU) IF THE PUBLIC'S LACK OF INTEREST IN THE VIOLATIONS CAN BE ATTRIBUTED TO AN INFORMATION GAP, WHICH WE DOUBT, THEY MAY BE RIGHT. IF, ON THE OTHER HAND, THE REFUSAL OF THE PUBLIC TO GET VERY CONCERNED WITH THE PAST REFLECTS MORE PROFOUND CAUSES, INCLUDING AN INDIFFERENCE TO STATE ORIGINATED VIOLENCE, THEN THE PUBLICATION HERE WILL NOT MAKE MUCH DIFFERENCE. BUT IF THE

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ACTIVISTS DO PUSH AHEAD WITH THEIR PLANS TO PUBLISH  
AND DISSEMINATE THE REPORT, THEN THE GOA WILL HAVE TO  
CHOOSE BETWEEN THE INTERNATIONAL REACTION AGAINST  
SUPPRESSING IT AND THE REACTION IN SOME MILITARY  
QUARTERS IF IT ALLOWS THE IAHRC DOCUMENT TO CIRCULATE.

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WHEN HE ALLUDED TO "ELEMENTS" OF THE INTER-AMERICAN SYSTEM WHICH "EXCEED THEIR MANDATES, INVADING TERRITORY WHICH IS CLOSED TO THEM, CREATING SITUATIONS WHICH GIVE RISE TO A LACK OF CONFIDENCE IN INTER-AMERICAN INSTITUTIONS." PASTOR WENT ON TO SAY THAT ORGANIZATIONS THAT BEHAVE IN THIS MANNER COULD BE "SOWING THE SEEDS" FOR THEIR EVENTUAL "SELF-DESTRUCTION." PASTOR'S TOUGH, IF INDIRECT, LANGUAGE, IS CLEARLY PART OF THE GOA'S EFFORT TO HAVE THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ATTENUATE, AT LEAST, THE IAHRG ARGENTINE REPORT.  
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